

January 17, 2012

Via E-mail and Certified Mail
Return Receipt Requested

Michelle Kerr, Remedial Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 5
Superfund Division (SR-6J)
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



426621

Re: **General Notice Letter for the Chemetco Superfund Site in Hartford, Illinois**

Dear Ms. Kerr:

Centrotrade Minerals and Metals, Inc. ("CTMM") hereby responds to the general notice letter, dated November 30, 2011, regarding the Chemetco Superfund Site in Hartford, IL (the "Site"). CTMM is willing to participate in future negotiations regarding settlement, but does not admit to any fact or liability, and reserves all available defenses with respect to any claims arising relative to the Site.

CTMM denies that it is liable under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act ("CERCLA") for any release of hazardous substances at the Site. The information reviewed to date indicates that, until approximately 2002, CTMM was engaged in metals trading whereby it purchased and sold valuable raw materials at market rates and for productive use by its buyers. CTMM's business did not include the production, transport, storage, or processing of metals.

Today, CTMM is not engaged in metals trading, having ceased operating that business in or about 2002. Since 2004, CTMM has engaged exclusively in the business of trading dry rubber and latex. Moreover, CTMM is a small company with limited resources: it typically employs between 10 and 12 people, and its historical annual pre-tax profits typically range from approximately \$500,000 to approximately \$800,000. (Calendar 2010 and 2011 have been uncharacteristically robust in the dry rubber and latex markets, and pre-tax profits were more than double historical levels in those years.)

In response to the general notice letter, and in preparing its response to EPA's §104(e) request for information, CTMM has diligently searched for information and documents relating to its alleged transactions with Chemetco. This process has been affected, as you can appreciate, by the passage of more than a decade since CTMM's alleged transactions with Chemetco, and by several intervening events, including: (1) that CTMM relocated from New York City to Chesapeake, Virginia; (2) that CTMM's business changed and its metal trading employees left the Company; and (3) that most of CTMM's historical files were destroyed in 2008, in the

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normal course after being retained for at least seven years. In addition, after CTMM participated in EPA's December 20, 2011 informational meeting, on Friday, January 13, 2012, we received a DVD containing data that EPA collected from the Site. But that DVD was defective, and the data on that DVD is not accessible. (Per your telephone conversation this morning with my colleague, Travis Leach, you agreed that EPA would send us a replacement DVD.)

If necessary and provided that we receive the data collected by EPA sufficiently in advance to permit CTMM's full review, CTMM will supplement this response by January 30, 2012.

Sincerely,



Colin G. Van Dyke

cc: Thomas Martin, Esq., Associate Regional Counsel